

Oh my, what a year!

I think we could all agree that it may just be the year that we would all like to forget. Our ministry, along with the rest of the world has seen its ups and downs. At the end of 2020, we were not able to go to Haiti to spend Christmas with the boys due to Covid-19. Ending that year with not spending time with boys was hard enough, but we never thought this year would turn out the way it did.

I traveled to Haiti in February to further investigate serious problems that had been occurring in the previous months at the boy's home. As a result, the Haitian board was disbanded and members of the American board chose to step down. In April, six of our boys were taken from the home without my consent. Despite our best efforts to have them returned to their home at Love and Grace, we were not able to make contact to see the boys due to the gang violence throughout the country.

June was a much better month. We moved the boys to another home, closer to the Bridge Home with a yard so they could play outside. A mission team of eight were able to travel to Haiti. We held a vacation bible school at a nearby church and were able to feed almost 200 children a day when we had only planned on feeding 125 children. It reminds me when Jesus fed the five thousand with only five loaves of bread and two fish. In addition, we poured a cement roof on a home and built a dining room table and shelving for the boy's backpacks.

July brought shock and outrage to the country. The president of Haiti, Jovenel Moïse, was assassinated. I, along with my two sons and another board member were still present in the country and felt the impact it made on its people. Gang violence emerged even worse than it had in previous months and the country was soon under lockdown. In August, a devastating earthquake hit the southern part of Haiti, which destroyed towns, villages, and left thousands homeless, along with the loss of lives. Gangs blocked rescue efforts from entering the areas.

September brought more hardship when the schools could not open due to violence. We went on lockdown until November when they finally were able to begin school. Gang violence took on another role when they blocked all fuel trucks from delivering gas to gas stations, hospitals, clinics, etc. It brought the country to a standstill when all public transportation was brought to a halt with no gas. When and if you could find gas on the streets they were asking \$15.00 a gallon. Hospitals were closing due to lack of fuel to run their generators. The price of food tripled and made it impossible for your average Haitian to survive. In October, one of the most prevalent gangs in Haiti kidnapped 17 missionaries and demanded a ransom of 17 million dollars. Only five have been released.

In spite of the heartaches we had to endure this year, we can rejoice in so many ways. We were blessed to receive five new boys this year, a new board was formed, and we received a grant to purchase brand new mattresses for the boys and staff and had solar panels installed at the boy's home to provide electricity. A woman's bible study on Hilton Head Island graciously volunteered to buy and fill 24 backpacks with new shoes, clothes, school supplies, and toys for Christmas. Two of our older boys from the Bridge Home came forward on their own to assist the new staff at the boy's home. This is a living testimony of our mission statement; to raise these young men to be Godly leaders in their own community. Thank you for being part of our family at Love and Grace. You have given these boys hope for the future with a home, education and the greatest hope of all, Jesus.

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

~ Romans 15:13 ~